

AGENDA

- I. Engaging Families
- II. Planning for Change
- III. The Family System
- IV. Areas Affected by the Entrance of New Members
- V. Family Members and Supports
- VI. Eco-Maps
- VII. The Porcupine Fable

FAMILY MEMBERS AND SUPPORTS LIST

Instructions: Fill in the first column with your immediate and extended family member's names. The second column should include all your social supports. This is anyone that you can count on for emotional support. Finally, in the third column, list all the community or institutional supports that you have used or are aware of that you can utilize for support.

Couples should complete this activity together.

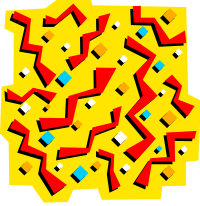
Family Members Immediate & Extended	Social Supports Friends and other people	Community/Institutional Supports Organizations

Family Systems...



The members of your family compose your family's "system." A system is a combination of things or parts forming a unified whole.

Families interact in patterns...



There are predictable patterns of interaction that emerge in a family system. These repetitive cycles help maintain the family's balance.

Families have boundaries...

- Families have boundaries, which can be viewed on a continuum from open to closed.

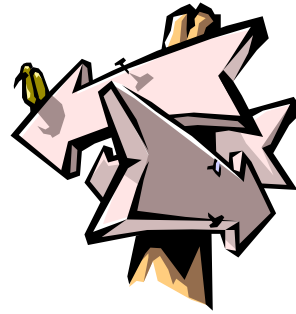
Different Types of Boundaries

- ❑ **Open boundary systems** allow people and situations outside the **family** to influence it. It may even welcome outside influences.
- ❑ **Closed boundary systems** isolate its family members from the outsiders and may seem isolated and self-contained.
- ❑ **Clear boundaries** are flexible. This allows an appropriate response to the given situation.

No family system is completely closed or completely open. Most will operate on a continuum.



Family Systems...



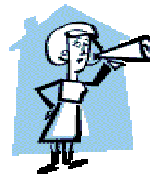
Families use messages and rules.

Messages and rules are relationship agreements, which limit a **family** members' behavior over time. They are repetitive and redundant. They are rarely, if ever, explicit or written down. They give power; they induce guilt; they control or limit behaviors; and they perpetuate themselves and reproduce. Most messages and rules can be stated in one or a few words. For example, "*More is good*", "*Be responsible*", and "*Be perfect*" are all examples of messages/rules.



Family members have roles...

Specific behaviors a member is expected to perform with rules that govern these behaviors.



All families communicate with...

Families establish (not necessarily consciously) patterned ways of initiating and responding to each other and the world.

A family's communication is composed of:

- ▶ Listening skills (attentiveness).
- ▶ Speaking skills (speaking for self).
- ▶ Self-disclosure (vulnerability/defensiveness).
- ▶ Respect and regard.

FAMILY ROLES

"Scapegoat"

This is the family member that the family feels ashamed of - and can be the most emotionally honest person in the family. They provide distraction from the real issues in the family.

"Placater" - "Mascot" - "Caretaker"

They become the families 'social director' and/or clown, diverting the family's attention from the pain and anger.

"Adjuster" - "Lost Child"

This member escapes by attempting to be invisible. They daydream, fantasize, read a lot of books or watch a lot of TV. They deal with reality by withdrawing from it.

"The Ambassador"

Represents the family to the outside world. Speaks on behalf of the family.

"The Comforter"

This family member serves as counselor from whom members seek advice and comfort and discuss problems.

"The Consultant"

A family member outside of the immediate family who is considered influential or powerful by the members. Enters and exits quickly but whose presence never goes unnoticed.

"The Financial Advisor"

Provides advice about financial matters to the family.

"The Fence-sitter"

Has no opinion about anything; generally agrees with the last opinion given to them.

"The Kin-keeper"

The family organizer. Keeps the family together, works hard at keeping the family in touch with one another.

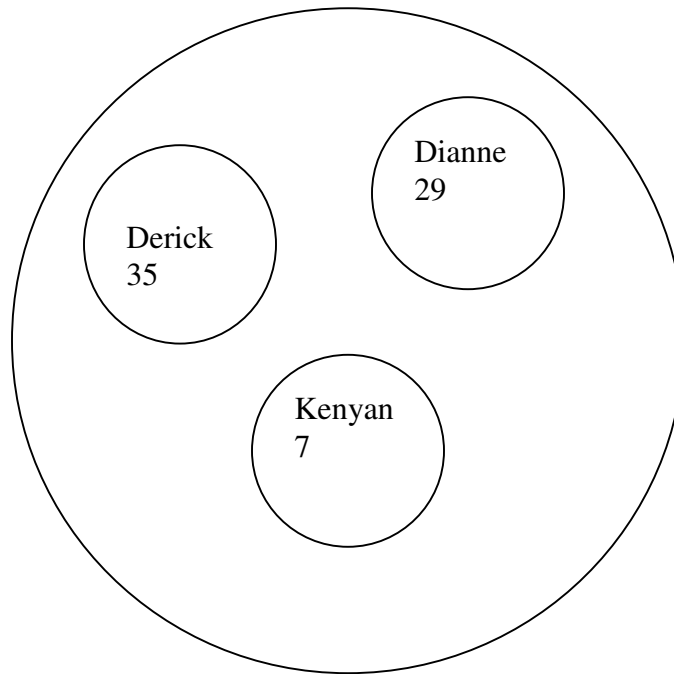
"Enforcer/Disciplinarian"

Enforces and most likely sets the household rules. Keeps control

CREATING YOUR FAMILY ECO-MAP

An Ecological Map (Eco-Map) is a visual representation of your family system and all the extended familial, community, and institutional supports that your family interacts with.

1. To create your Eco-Map begin by drawing a large circle. Place inside this circle the members of your immediate family (those living in your household). Put each of their names in a circle of their own within the large circle.



2. Outside of the larger circle, create circles of varying sizes to represent your interactions with extended family, work, community, social, institutions or any other type of system that your family regularly interacts with. Utilize your Family Supports list which you completed at the beginning of this session to remind you of people and places to include.
3. The last step is to create the visual relationships. This is done by drawing a line from the larger circle to the outer circles using the following key:

----- Dashed line = Weak relationship

_____ Solid Line=Strong Relationship

//////////////////// Hashed Line=Difficult or Problem Relationship

NOTE: Each circle drawn outside the circle should be connected to the larger circle. Relationships inside the circle can also have connecting lines indicating relations inside the home.

